

## ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

Method and devices are provided for allocating network resources in a flexible manner. In some implementations, a customer's unused resources for a particular type of service are assigned to another type of service. In other implementations, a first customer's unused resources are assigned to a second customer, e.g., in exchange for a relatively lower service charge to the first customer. The unused bandwidth may be assigned on a hierarchical or a non-hierarchical basis. In preferred embodiments, resources are allocated using a token bucket methodology. Preferably, high-priority resources are not compromised by the allocation scheme. The discipline or manner in which resources or bandwidth are shared may be specified in a static fashion or information regarding the state of congestion in the network maybe used to generate a dynamic (time varying) specification.